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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/222,833

12/30/1998

TADASHI OHASHI

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10/27/2003

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EXAMINER

HUYNH, CONG LAC T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2178

DATE MAILED: 10/27/2003

24

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/222,833

Applicant(s)

OHASHI, TADASHI

Examiner

Cong-Lac Huynh

Art Unit

2178

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: RCE filed 8/7/03 to the application filed on 12/30/98, priority 7/24/98.
2. Claims 1-9 are pending in the case. Claims 1, 7-9 are independent claims.
3. The rejections of claims 1, 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Nielson have been withdrawn as necessitated by the amendment.
4. The rejections of claims 2-6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Nielson and further in view of Domen have been withdrawn as necessitated by the amendment.

Priority

5. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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7. Claims 1-3, 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hager et al. (US Pat No. 5,247,661, 9/21/93) in view of Shakib et al. (US Pat No. 5,787,262, 7/28/98, filed 6/26/96).

Regarding independent claim 1, Hager discloses:

- storing said electronic multimedia objects (col 3, lines 16-30 and col 4, lines 16-37: storage device to store documents for distribution which are invention disclosure documents – it was well known that the invention disclosure documents include text and graphics, and so are considered as multimedia documents or multimedia objects)
- acquiring information from a device connected to the communication network (figure 1; col 3, lines 30-67)
- each distributed document has a document profile including information about the specific functional areas of the specific recipients where the invention documents are transmitted to for evaluation (col 2, lines 20-38 and col 1, lines 24-67)
- accessing the employee file for determining the department/division data included in the functional areas in the employee files (col 7, line 47 to col 8, line 15)
- error checking of document data before transmitting (figure 2)

Hager does not disclose:

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- determining, for each electronic multimedia object stored in the electronic multimedia object storage section by reading out the master attribute information maintained by said information management device through said communication section, whether the attribute information included in the document conflicts with the master attribute information
- rewriting any of the attribute information included in the document when said determination section determined that the attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information

Shakib discloses comparing the received properties to local properties to *check the conflict* between the received and local properties of the distributed data objects (figure 6, #148 and abstract) and resolving the conflict by *replacing the received properties with the latest version* (col 24, line 61 to col 25, line 57; figure 6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Shakib into Hager for the following reason. Shakib discloses a method for distributed conflict resolving by *checking the conflict* of the properties of the data object and by *replacing the properties* with the latest version providing the advantage of enhancing the checking of the employee files for department/division data assigned to the functional areas and *the error checking of document data* before transmitting the document as in Hager as well as suggesting rewriting of data if a conflict is found.

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Regarding to claim 2, which is dependent on claim 1, Hager and Shakib do not disclose:

- each document comprises corporate organization codes as well as corporate organization names as attribute information used to manage distribution targets of each document
- the attribute information included in a document conflicts with the master attribute information in a case where the corporate organization codes included in said document are stored in the master attribute information but a combination of the corporate organization codes with the corporate organization names is not stored therein, and also in the case where the corporate organization names included in said document are stored in the master attribute information but the combination of the corporate organization codes with the corporate organization names is not stored therein
- rewriting corporate organization names and rewriting corporate organization codes in said document when the above conflicts are determined

Instead, Hager discloses that each functional area for each inventor used for distributing the invention document includes the code and the description which is the department name corresponding to the code (figure 4B) where the functional area data can be determined in the document profile and the employee file (col 2, lines 20-38 and col 4, lines 38-53; col 7, line 47 to col 8, line 15).

Shakib discloses replacing the data with the latest version if a conflict is found (as mentioned in claim 1).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Hager to include the organization name and the organization code since the code and the description, which is equivalent to the department name, of the functional area in Hager suggests the department code and the department name for distributing the media document.

Further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Shakib to include rewriting the code and the name of the organization and combined to Hager since Shakib's disclosure of replacing the data with the latest version if a conflict is found in the method of distributed conflict resolution suggests rewriting the proper data for the data object. Since the data relating to the distributed object, which is the invention document, includes the codes and the description equivalent to the department/division name for distributing, said Shakib feature can be applied to the data of Hager to rewrite the object data in Hager.

Regarding claim 3, which is dependent on claim 2, Shakib discloses:

- comparing the received properties of the data object to the local properties (figure 6, #148)
- the conflict of the received properties and the local properties of the data object if found (figure 6, #150)

Hager and Shakib do not disclose:

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- maintaining *second master attribute information*, in which a corporate organization code or a corporate organization name can be retrieved using job information, is connected to the communication network
- retrieving a corporate organization code or a corporate organization name correlated to job information of the electronic multimedia object from the second master attribute information
- rewriting contents of said document, when a combination of the corporate organization code with the corporate organization name retrieved does not coincide with the combination of the corporate organization code with the corporate organization name included in the document

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Shakib to include said maintaining, said retrieving, and said rewriting for the following reason. As mentioned above, Shakib discloses selecting properties with latest time stamps and merging properties if the *conflict of properties of the distributed object is found* (figure 6). Therefore, the case when the combination of the corporate organization code and the corporate organization name retrieved from the master attributes does not coincide with the combination of the corporate organization code and the corporate organization name included in the document, can be the case when the conflict is found between the received properties of the object, which is equivalent to the master attributes information of the data object, and the local properties, which is equivalent to the attribute information of the data object. This also can be the case when the functional areas, which is the target in document distribution,

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has the conflict with the department name and the corresponding code stored previously in the employee files.

Independent claim 7 is for a computer-readable medium for claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

Independent claim 8 is for a computer system for claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

Independent claim 9 is for a system for managing electronic documents of claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

8. Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hager in view of Shakib as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Domen et al. (US Pat No. 5,504,676, 4/2/96, filed 5/26/94).

Regarding claims 4-6, which are dependent on claims 1-3 respectively, Shakib discloses *sending a conflict notification to notify the changes* of the properties of the data object (figure 6, #160; col 26, lines 40-52).

However, Hager and Shakib do not disclose *outputting an electronic mail*, when the document is rewritten, *to notify changing* of an attribute information in the document to

each department identified by the attribute information included in the rewritten document.

Domen discloses *using an electronic email to notify things to other work station* (col 2, lines 31-34, command is issued from a terminal ... the prepared form may be transmitted to other work station by an electronic mail).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Domen into Hager and Shakib since Domen has the advantage of using email in notifying things to other work station providing the capability of enhancing the sending of the conflict notification via messages as in Shakib.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicants argue that Johnson does not disclose the attribute for distribution relating to the distribution target since the attribute is merely information alert to the user or to the system to take specific actions when disseminating the document to the destination email addresses (Remarks, page 8).

Examiner agrees.

Johnson is withdrawn from the rejection.

Hager, cited in this office action, discloses the attribute information of an object for distribution relating to the distribution target (col 2, lines 20-38 and col 1, lines 24-67:

each distributed document has a document profile including information about *the specific functional areas of the specific recipients* where the invention documents are *transmitted to* for evaluation).

Applicants argue that Nielsen does not disclose the master attribute information which corresponds to a plurality types of attribute information since the Nielsen's database is merely one type of attribute information which is the email address. Applicants further argue that Nielsen does not disclose determining whether the attribute information of the electronic multimedia object conflicts with the master attribute information and the updating the attribute information based on determining if there is a conflict (Remarks, page 9).

Examiner agrees.

Nielson is withdrawn from the rejection.

Hager discloses the master attribute information which corresponds to a plurality types of attribute information (col 7, line 47 to col 8, line 15 and figure 4B: the employee files containing the functional area data including the codes and the names of where the document can be sent to). It is noted that since it was well known that the invention disclosure documents include text and graphics, the invention disclosure documents in Hager are considered as multimedia documents or multimedia objects.

In addition, Hager discloses the attribute information of the electronic multimedia object (col 2, lines 20-38: the document profile includes the functional areas for transmitting the document to the recipients). Hager further discloses error checking of all required data before transmitting the documents (col 5, lines 1-12; figure 2, #64).

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Shakib discloses comparing between the received properties and the local properties to check the conflict, and selecting the properties with latest time stamps and merging the properties if a conflict is found (figure 6) where said selecting and merging are for replacing the properties with the latest version (col 25, lines 1-57).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Shakib into Hager since Shakib discloses a method for distributed conflict resolving by *checking the conflict* of the properties of the data object and by *replacing the properties* with the latest version providing the advantage of enhancing the checking of the employee files for department/division data assigned to the functional areas and *the error checking of document data* before transmitting the document as in Hager as well as suggesting rewriting of data if a conflict is found.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Tabuchi et al. (US Pat No. 6,332,160 B1, 12/18/01, 6/25/98).

Guttman et al. (US Pat No. 6,366,918 B1, 4/2/02, 3/21/00, priority 2/29/96).

Demers et al. (US Pat No. 5,870,761, 2/9/99, 12/19/96).

Hogberg et al. (US Pat No. 6,377,540 B1, 4/23/02, 7/31/98).

Ahlstrom et al. (US Pat No. 6,327,618 B1, 12/4/01, 12/3/98).

Souder et al. (US Pat No. 5,724,556, 3/3/98, 4/14/95).

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Candan et al., CHIMP: A framework for supporting distributed multimedia document authoring and presentation, ACM 1996, pages 329-340.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cong-Lac Huynh whose telephone number is 703-305-0432. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30-6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Herndon can be reached on 703-308-5186. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 707-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-9000.

clh
10/15/03



SANJIV SHAH
PRIMARY EXAMINER